

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

PG:  
Inventory No. 82A-57

### 1. Name of Property

(indicate preferred name)

historic

other

Griffith Tobacco Barn No. 1

### 2. Location

street and number 7809 -7815 Croom Road

not for publication

city, town Upper Marlboro

vicinity

county Prince George's

### 3. Owner of Property

(give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name John A. Griffith, Jr. et al.

street and number 11316 Lenox Drive

telephone

city, town Upper Marlboro

state MD

zip code 20774-5712

### 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.

liber

folio

city, town

tax map

tax parcel

tax ID number

### 5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District  
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District  
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER  
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### 6. Classification

#### Category

☐ district  
☒ building(s)  
☐ structure  
☐ site  
☐ object

#### Ownership

☐ public  
☒ private  
☐ both

#### Current Function

☐ agriculture  
☐ commerce/trade  
☐ defense  
☐ domestic  
☐ education  
☐ funerary  
☐ government  
☐ health care  
☐ industry  
☐ landscape  
☐ recreation/culture  
☐ religion  
☐ social  
☐ transportation  
☐ work in progress  
☒ unknown  
☐ vacant/not in use  
☐ other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Resource Count

Contributing	Noncontributing
_____	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
_____	_____ Total

Number of Contributing Resources  
previously listed in the Inventory  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 7. Description

Inventory No. 82A-57

### Condition

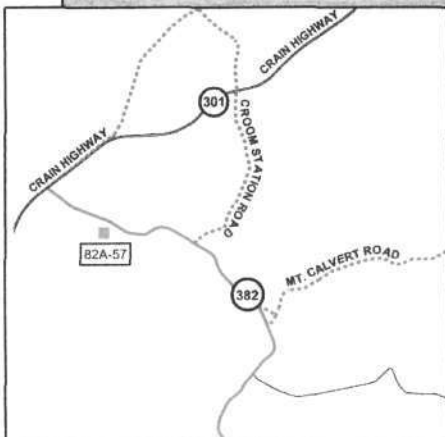
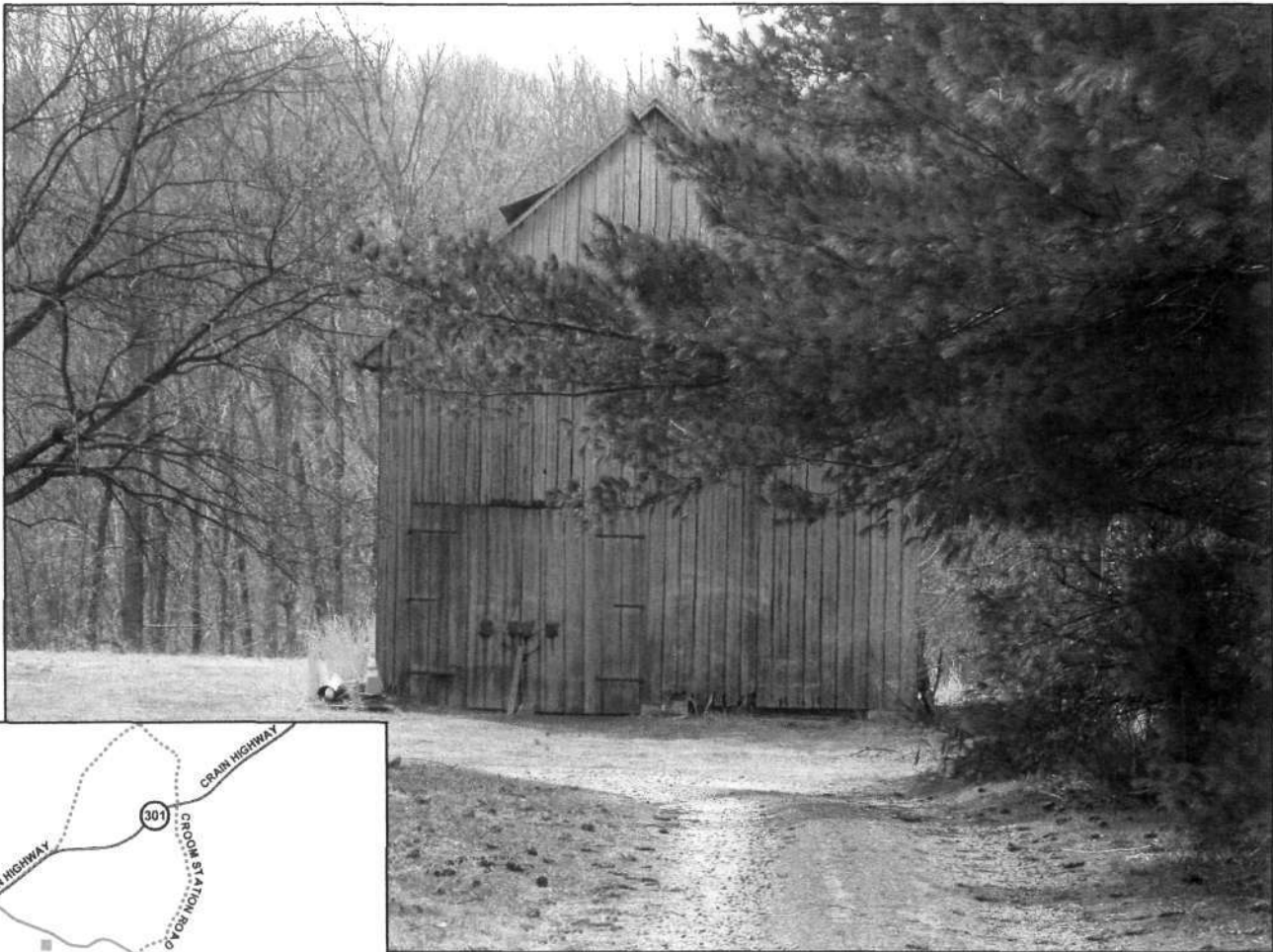
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This tobacco barn is sited to the south of Croom Road down a short driveway, near a dwelling. Mature trees are positioned on all sides of the barn.

Built circa 1900, this barn has a concrete block pier foundation supporting a wood structural system clad in vertical board. The gable roof is covered with standing seam metal and features overhanging open eaves. Hinged vertical air doors line the northwest and southeast elevations. Double-leaf wood vertical board doors are positioned in the gable ends.

Access to this barn was not granted. Tobacco is no longer cultivated on any of the land associated with this barn.



## 8. Significance

pg: Inventory No. 82A-57

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/	<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____	

Specific dates c.1900 Architect/Builder Unknown

Construction dates c.1900

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☐ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

During the more than two centuries in which tobacco served as the money crop in Prince George's County, planters, indentured servants, slaves, and farmers developed utilitarian structures for tobacco curing and packing that have remained essentially the same to the present day. Early barns were square in plan and constructed of notched logs with open spaces between the logs to permit the circulation of air (a log dwelling had chinking and caulking between the logs to prevent the infiltration of air). Inside, scaffolding held the tobacco sticks with the leaves suspended from them in such a way as to allow air to flow over the drying tobacco to prevent mold. Farmers employing the fire-curing method lit small fires on the barn's earthen floor to lower the relative humidity (Percy 1979:33). The Prince George's County barns differed from those constructed in Virginia and North Carolina for the flue curing of bright-leaf tobacco, which employed a stove or firebox with a flue and require a different type of barn—one that was essentially airtight to hold the heat. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the increasing availability of sawn lumber enabled southern Maryland's farmers to construct timber-frame tobacco barns covered with wooden siding, usually vertical board siding. Southern Maryland's air cured tobacco utilized barns constructed with air doors along the sides that could be opened to facilitate the circulation of air. These air doors were three or four vertical boards fastened together and usually hinged that could be opened.

The earliest tobacco barns identified in the survey along Croom Road are the ca. 1820 Duvall Tobacco Barn (87A-31) and the 1800-1830 Watson Tobacco Barn (87A-55) and the most recent barns date to the middle of the twentieth century such as the Stielper (87A-48), Jackson (87A-47), and Chase (87A-44) tobacco barns. Although the dates of construction for the surveyed barns range over one hundred and thirty years, the construction materials, methods of construction, and form of the tobacco barn changed very little. All of the barns surveyed are wood-frame and clad in vertical boards; all of the barns contain four-foot by four-foot rooms to hang the tobacco; and all of the barns have hinged vertical board air doors to control the circulation of air within the barns. The changes in form are very minor but provide the most insight into the date of construction. Early nineteenth century barns have steeply pitched gable roofs. From about 1830 until 1900 the barns have more standardized gable roofs, sometimes with one side of the gable extended to create a shed roof over a stripping room. Around 1900, the use of tractors increased in Prince George's County and central double-leaf doors opening onto a wide central passage began to appear in the barn. The final form change was the advent of the gambrel roof, which created more space within the barn to hang tobacco. Gambrel roofs begin to appear in the 1930s and 1940s.

This barn is significant as an example of a c.1900 or earlier tobacco barn in Prince George's County, Maryland and fits into the third period of tobacco barn construction. The double doors, which indicate a c.1900 or later date, may be later additions as the barn does have an earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century form.

AG:  
Inventory No. 82A-57

Calvert County Historic District Commission, "Tobacco Barns Calvert County Maryland," Prince Frederick, Md: Calvert County Historic District Commission, 1991), brochure.

Acreage of surveyed property 20.48  
 Acreage of historical setting \_\_\_\_\_  
 Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle scale:

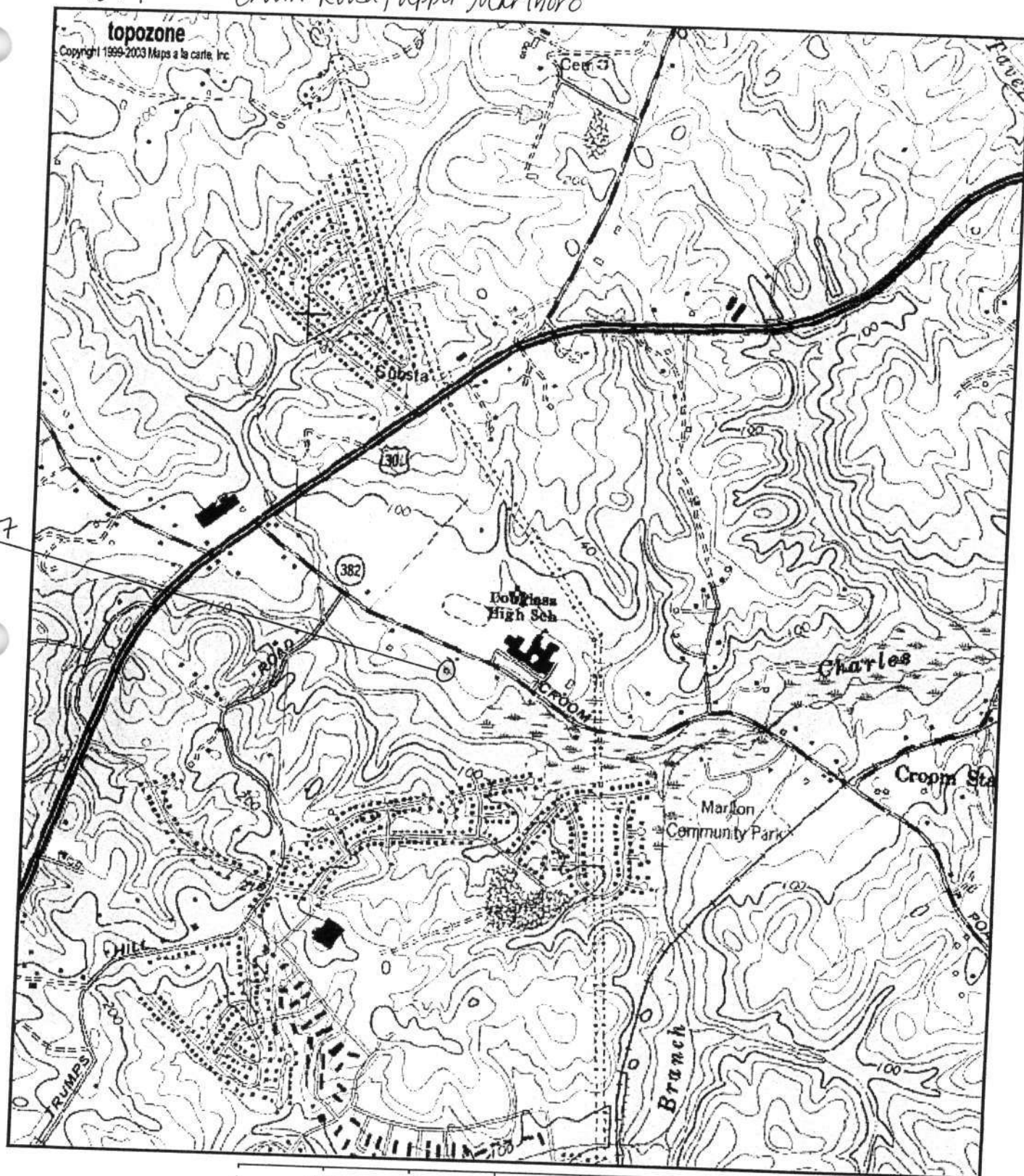
name/title	J. Shafagoj, Architectural Historian		
organization	Ashley Neville, LLC	date	March 1, 2006
street & number	11311 Cedar Lane	telephone	804.798.2124
city or town	Glen Allen	state	VA

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
DHCD/DHCP  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
410-514-7600



Giffith Tobacco Barn No. 1  
7809 Croom Road, Upper Marlboro

PG: 82A-57



0 0.3 0.6 0.9 1.2 1.5 km  
0 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 1 mi

UTM 18 345201E 4294227N (NAD83/WGS84)  
**Douglass High School, USGS Upper Marlboro (MD) Quadrangle**  
Projection is UTM Zone 18 NAD83 Datum

M \*  
G  
M=-10.977  
G=-1.117